



# NORMAN HAZARD

or  
The Fur  
Trader's Story.

By  
Henry Ross  
1906

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Or  
THE FUR TRADER'S STORY.

By HENRY ROSS.

1908.

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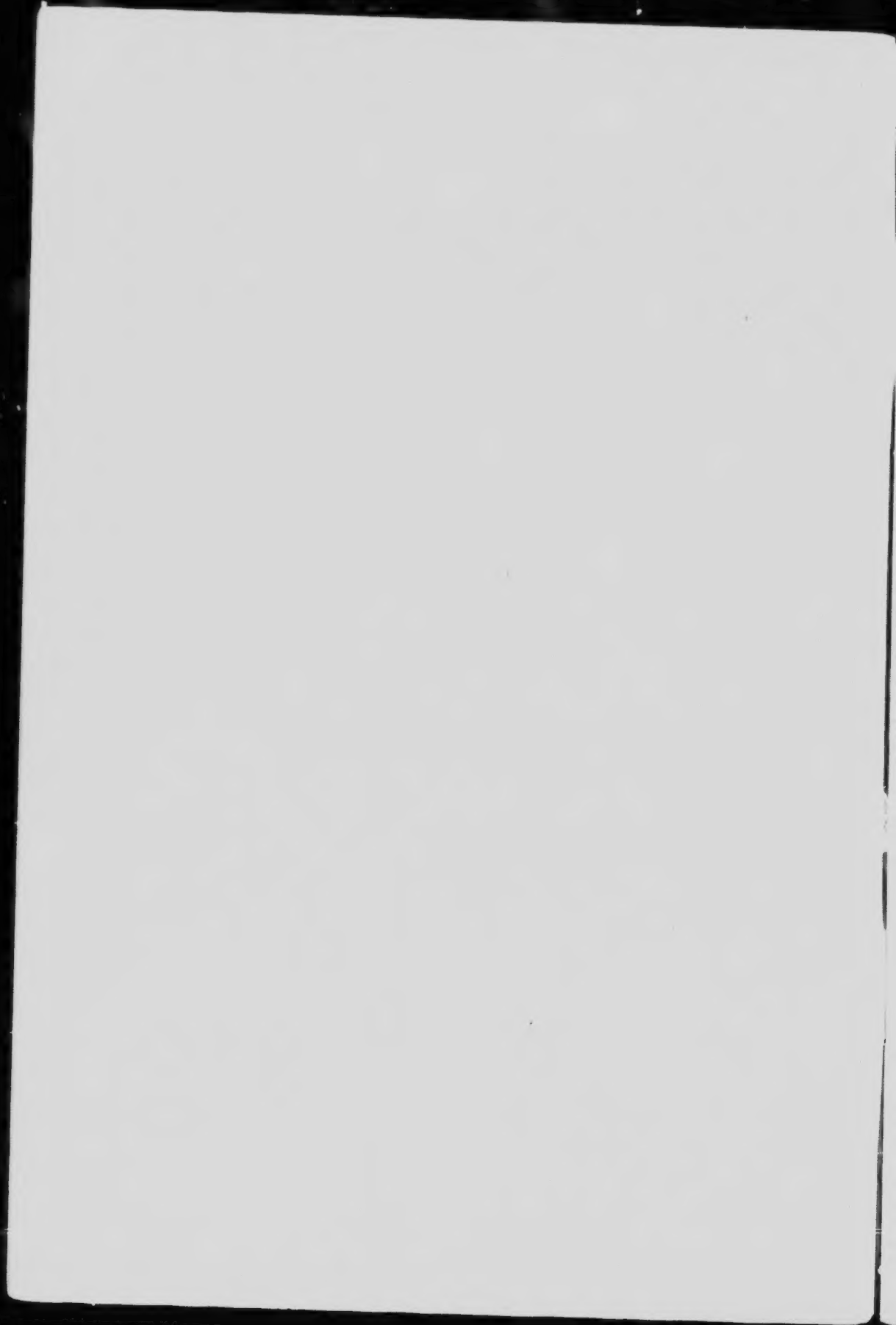
**Norman Hazard,**  
**Or**  
**The Fur Trader's Story.**

Hast thou returned all safe and well,  
From Arctic regions by the sea?  
Sit quickly down, the story tell,  
That we may listen unto thee.

"That I will do," the man replied,  
"For, stormy is the night, and cold;"  
Then bending low he turned aside,  
And thus a tale of sorrow told.

**THE FUR TRADER'S STORY.**

"Mild April's sun beyond the hill,  
Had tipped with light the mountains tall;  
The winds were hushed, and all was still,  
Save clamorous clack of busy mill  
Or moan of distant waterfall



"That morn I left my native town,  
With boat, and guide, to wander free,  
Through lands remote, and forests brown,  
To gather furs and eider down,  
Along the distant Arctic Sea

"No toiling waves were chasing o'er,  
The watery plain by winds pursued;  
Our boat slid on: the fading shore,  
Went gently down: the dipping oar,  
With furrowed lines the water strewed.

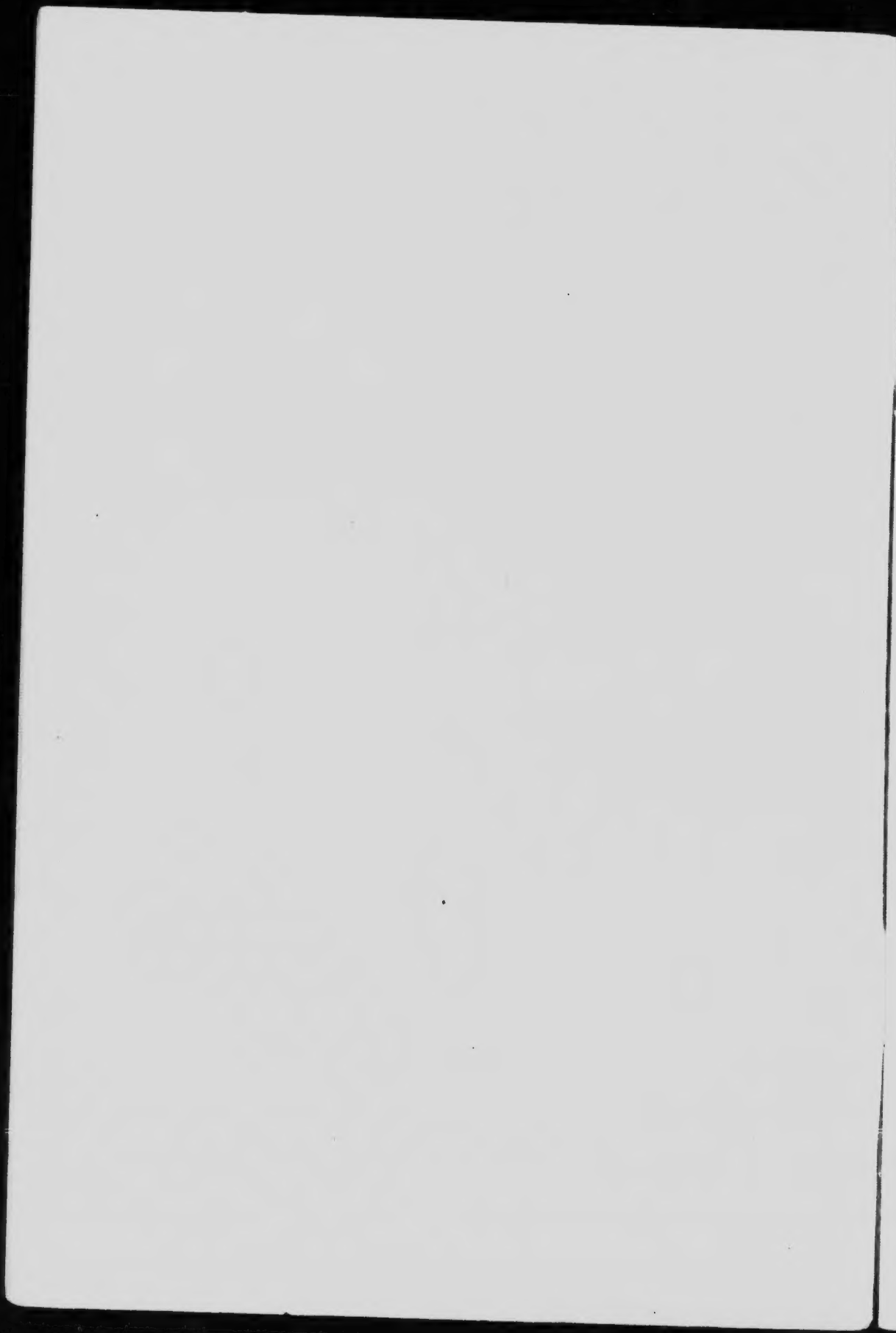
"The northern uplands rising bare,  
With rock and cliff the wilds deform,  
Or towering on, the heavens dare,  
Where late at night the startled air,  
Bewails the spirit of the storm.

"Half hid by hills encircling wide,  
A hermit's camp was faintly seen,  
While down the rocky mountain side,  
Aloud and deep a torrent cried,  
And woke to life the dark ravine.

"And soon a song with music fraught,  
Was heard distinctly in the glen;  
For, in that wild, secluded spot,  
Through storm and shine, a hermit wrought,  
And dwelt apart from other men.

"When thus my guide, 'The nights are damp,  
And dreary at this time of year,  
And gladly we should seek the camp,  
For wild the waste and darkness near.'

"Although alone from day to day,  
He welcomes all unto his door;  
The man is old, and lame and gray,  
And, Norman Hazard, he is poor."



"We traced along a narrow road,  
That led us o'er uneven ground,  
Until we gained that strange abode,  
And there a source of comfort found.

"A cricket singing in the hearth,  
A robin in a tree near by  
And other songsters of the earth  
Were flooding the camp with melody.

"You seem content, and happy here,"  
I said unto that aged man ;  
He pensive seemed, for soon a tear,  
He brushed away, and thus began :—

"Alas my friend you cannot know,  
The ills of life that others bear,  
My aching breast feels keen a woe,  
No one with me can ever share.

"My wife ; she died ; I ne'er forget,  
The time that she was called away,  
Thrice seven long years ago, and yet  
To me it seems but yesterday.

"Possessed of loveliness and grace,  
With all the finer traits combined,  
She was the fairest of her race,  
The pride of earth and womankind.

"I sought for comfort in the town,  
But still unhappy was I there,  
I roamed the country up and down,  
A prey to sorrow, woe and care.

"Bowed down with unrelenting grief,  
A short reprieve I strove to find ;  
But naught to me could bring relief,  
Or sweet contentment to my mind.





"To live apart from worldly ills,  
Within a home however rude,  
Is why I seek among these hills,  
A resting source of solitude.

"Where each small bird with artless song,  
May rise at morn and happy sing,  
In silvan shades the wood along,  
And greet me with its welcoming.

"But sadder still the time hath been,  
Since first we left our fields behind,  
I and my child,—a lad of ten,  
And like his mother, ever kind.

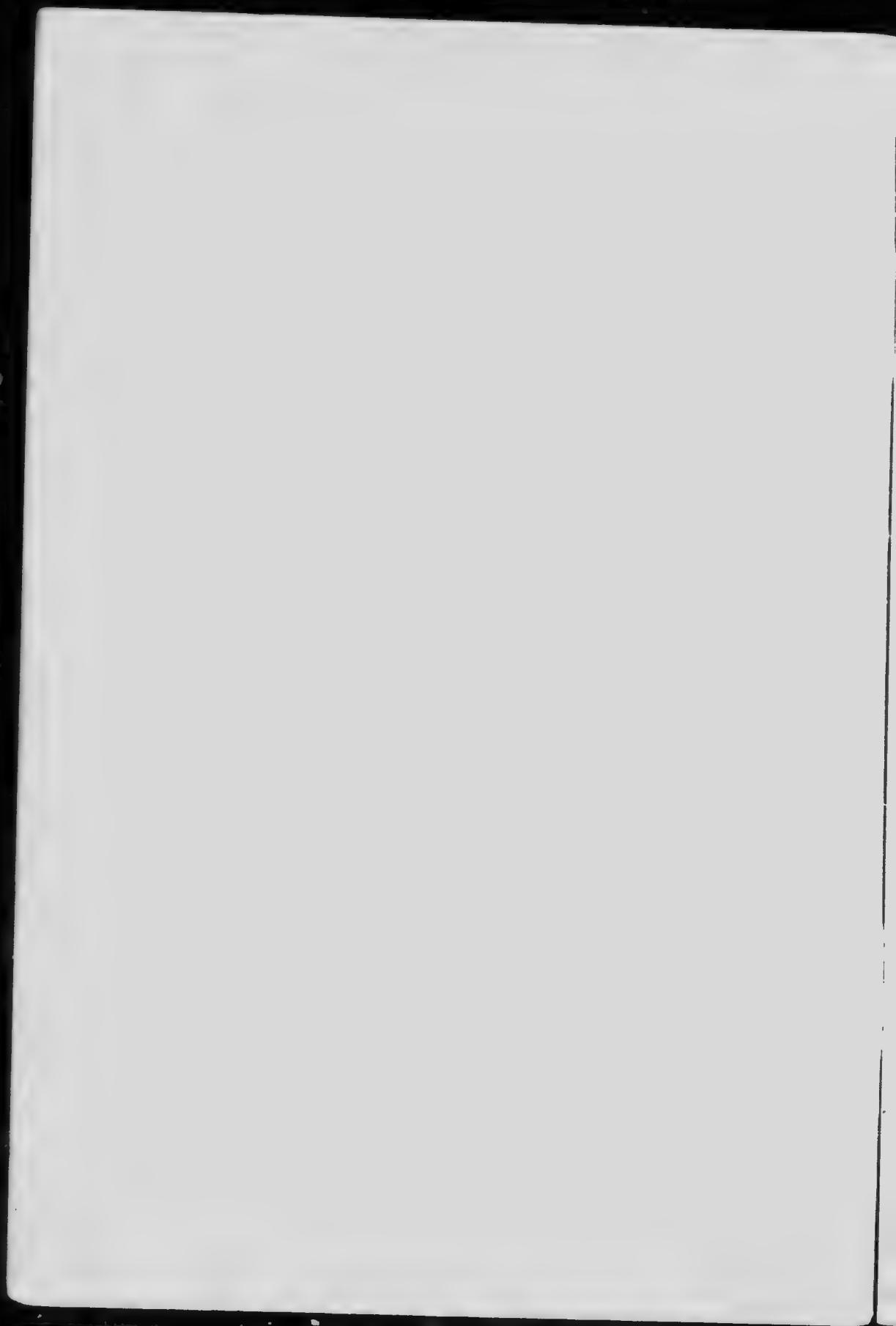
"When hither bent, our dancing skill,  
Belated passed o'er rock and bar,  
While far above yon towering cliff,  
Before us beamed the polar star.

"Increasing winds blew loud and high,  
And brought o'er all the scene a change ;  
The lightnings flashed along the sky,  
And lit the lonely mountain range.

" 'Mid dangers rife ; upon this shore  
At night, we landed years ago,  
And listened to the thunder's roar,  
While madly leaped the waves below.

"When ceased the storm, no voice nor sound,  
Save cry of prowling wolf was heard,  
Upon the slopes and hills around,  
That in the gray of morn appeared.

"But sweet aloft the dim woods rang,  
Along this eastern shore and bay,  
When loud the lark and linnet sang,  
To us the coming of the day.



"Far out upon a crag that frowned,  
Above a torrent deep and cold,  
We viewed the lowly lakes around,  
That gleaming in the distance rolled.

"Ere summer waned, a camp was made,  
And all my hopes renewed with joy ;  
For, in this wild sequestered glade,  
Walked then in health my only boy.

"The winter came with storms at last,  
Of sleet and hail and driving snow,  
While loudly roared the dreary blast,  
And rocked the forest to and fro.

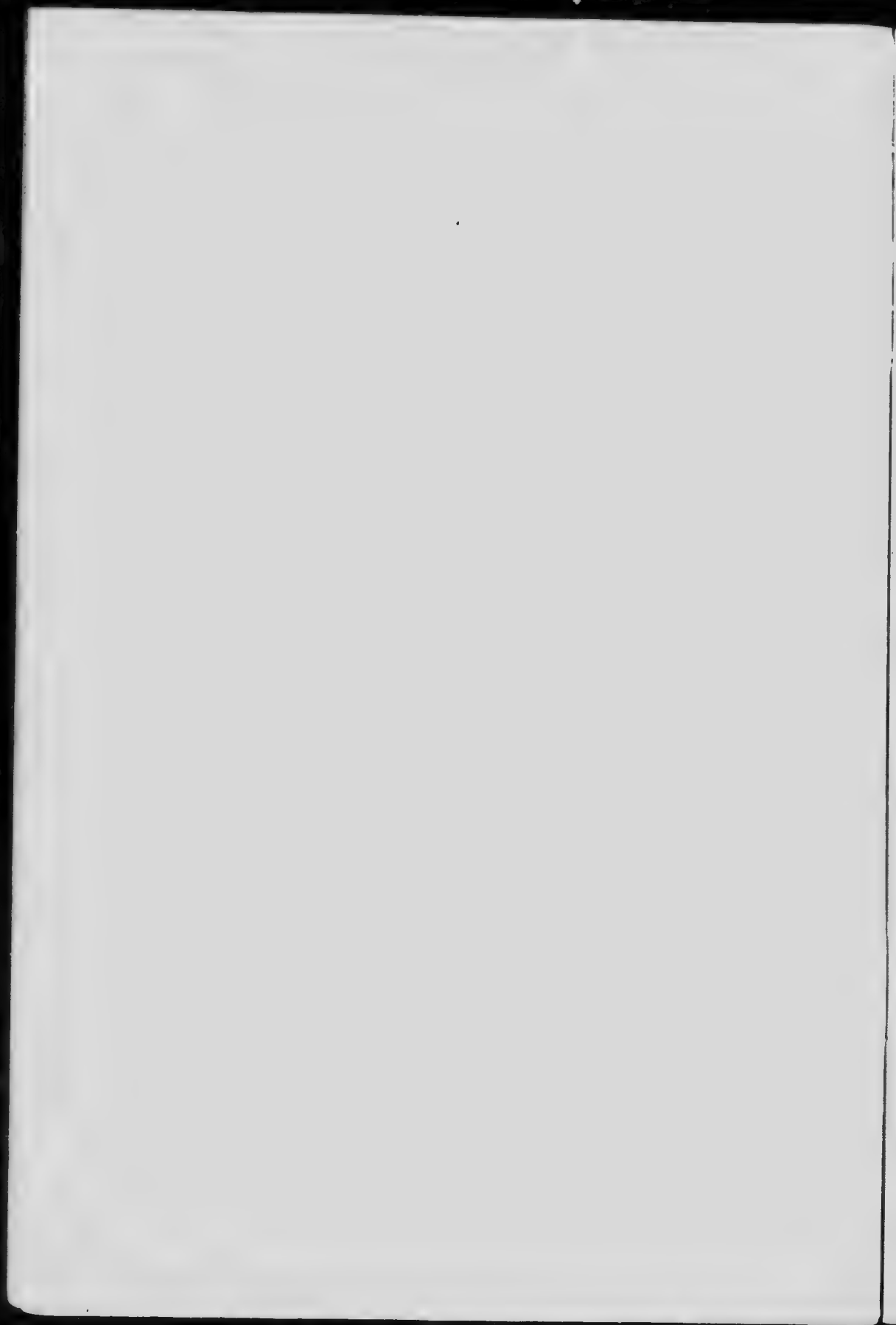
"But April in its vernal tide,  
Swept o'er the earth with mystic wing,  
And the relentless winter died,  
Beneath a balmy gale of spring.

"Down by the lake with rod and line,  
My boy oft sat by yonder tree,  
Where he, to while away the time,  
A catch of song would sing to me.

"The wilds whene'er of home he sung,  
Were wont their vocal parts to bear,  
While cave and bay and thicket rung,  
Responsive on the evening air.

"Three years together we had staid ;—  
The cruel fourth was fraught with woe ;  
When fate unsparing came and laid,  
My slender boy forever low.

At morn he died. With hope and fear  
I watched with him until the dawn,  
When thus he spoke :—'Oh, father dear,  
I know that death is waiting near,  
And you'll be lonely when I'm gone.'



"I would that you for death prepare,  
Nor further grieve thyself for me ;  
We'll meet beyond this world of care,  
And mother too, will sure be there ;  
And God our Father then will be.

"How dark and cold ; nor can I stay ;  
I know 'tis well that I should die.'  
And then his spirit winged away,  
To meet its God within the sky.

"Within the earth above the vale,  
I laid his body, once so fair ;  
The waving woods sigh in the gale,  
And Nature sings his requiem there.

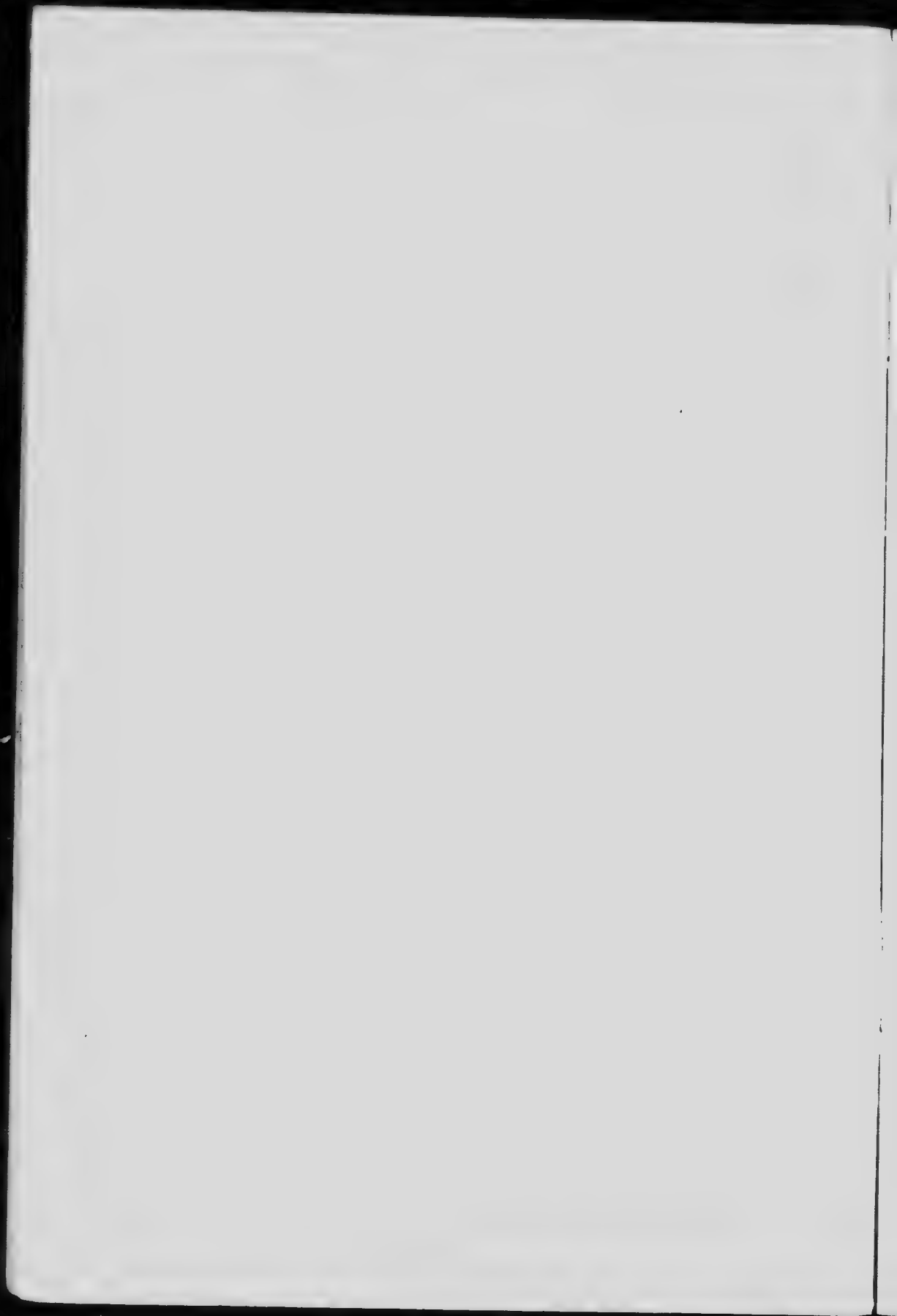
"I miss him on the mountain high,  
But still more at the forest side ;  
Alas, to me, that he should die ;  
My hope, my Arthur, and my pride.

"And since that time from day to day  
I've wandered much, all danger braving ;  
At times in grief I strive to pray,  
At other times I'm nearly raving.

"No more to me the valley rings  
With tuneful accents of his song ;  
No twilight elfin plumes its wings  
To waft those happy strains along.

"But now at eve within the wood,  
I hear the owlet on the hill ;  
The hoding loon above the flood ;  
Or listen to the whippoorwill.

"Of him who knew no human wrong,  
Whose voice at times I seem to hear,  
In glen and gorge, the wood along,  
I can but mourn my Arthur dear.



"Sometimes benumbed with cold and pain,  
Alone, without a friend or kind  
I hear the clattering snow and rain,  
While lonely moans the midnight wind.

"Sometimes in want, I bide the time,  
Ere traders reach this place in spring,  
When downy furs are passing prime,  
And they my necessities bring

"Alas, my friend, when breaks the morn,  
Prepare said I, and go with me,  
No more in want or here forlorn,  
In lonely wretchedness to be.

"It ill beseems that one in years,  
Like you, should here neglected die ;  
My home is yours, so dry those tears."  
I paused, and then he made reply :—

"Those ever shining orbs on high,  
The sun, and moon, and starry train,  
Teach us but this, that we shall die,  
And like the planets in the sky  
That seem to set, will rise again.

"These friendly hills, and lakes below,  
And all the bays along the shore  
That knew me once, they soon will know,  
The where and place of me no more.

"Beyond the reach of earthly sight,  
I seek to find a happier home,  
Within the day that knows no night,  
Where grief and woe can never come

"I pray to Him within the sky,  
Who stills the tempest and the storm,  
That I forgiven here may die,  
And here arise at judgment morn."





"He ceased : and then, he knelt in prayer  
To Him who bids the planets roll,  
The God of angels, earth and air  
The God of mercy to the soul.

"How little know the men of might  
They who in pomp and riches shine,  
That other men with spirits bright,  
In poverty obscurely pine.

"The hour was late. The clouds of night,  
In darkness veiled the rising moon.  
While from the hearth a fitful light  
At intervals lit up the gloom.

"The mountain burn above the dell.  
Ver crag and rock adown was pouring  
And like a spirit sad and fell,  
And there enchained was loudly roaring.

"The morning came, and with it too  
The sun had neared the zenith, when  
Down by the lake we bid adieu,  
To Norman Hazard of the glen.

"From off the shore a breeze upblew  
Our boat was like a falcon driven  
While through the deep ethereal blue  
The sun moved down the vault of heaven.

"Although in haste we journeyed on  
Week after week had passed ere we  
With trader's packs encamped upon  
The shore of Lake Abittibee.

"Thrice happy wild Abittibee !  
The handiwork of God above,  
Whose waters hastening to the sea,  
Like an imprisoned bird set free,  
Exultant sings a song of love.



"I would that I had words to tell  
What I can only ill convey  
How thick the sunlight flashed and fell,  
On burnished walls around each bay.

"And how in caves the trappers brave,  
The biting frosts of northern clime  
While high the waves tumultuous rave  
Beneath the battlements of Time.

"We landed there at set of sun  
And with some huntsmen passed the night,  
Who rose at dawn with dog and gun,  
To hunt the deer far up the height.

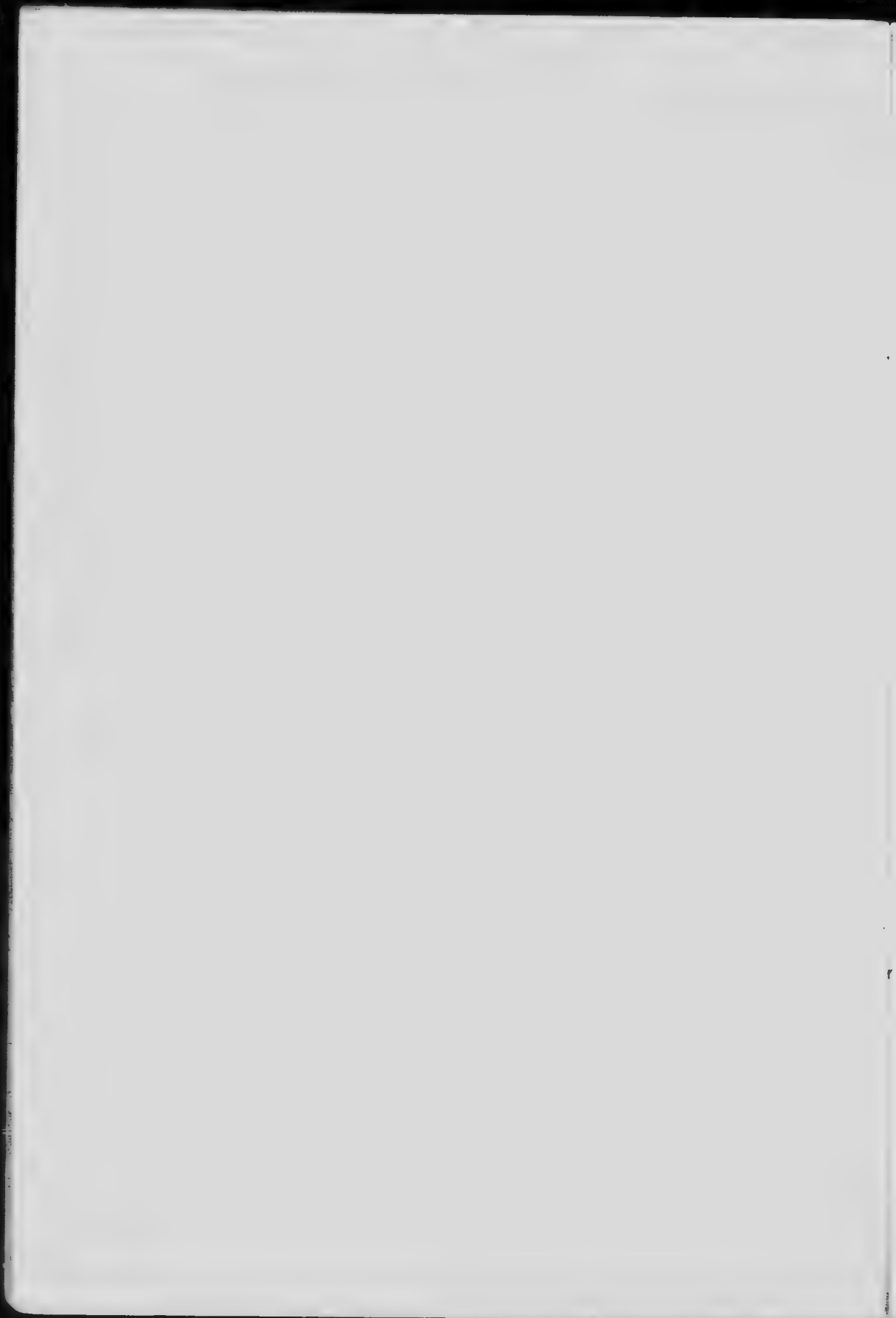
"Now faint aloft ; now loud and clear  
Is heard the huntsman's wild halloo ;  
Sharp bay the beagles ; while in fear  
Through paths of danger fly each deer  
Unto the quiet vales below.

"The trembling deer with slackening bounds,  
In terror hears the beagles cry,  
Then onward fly before the hounds  
Until at last it sinks to die.

"Like those whose work is never done  
From thence we tramped through frost and snow,  
Unto a country sad and lone,  
Where dwelt the hardy Eskimo.

"In spring when birds were piping forth,  
Their happy notes o'er lake and lea,  
We sought new lands far in the north,  
That skirt the distant Arctic Sea

"Through ways deceptive, sad and mute,  
That led us on through furze and broom,  
And where the Sumac's deadly fruit,  
Allures the traveller to his doom.



"We hurried on in deep despair,  
O'er hill and dale, and trackless heath,  
Where desolation reigned, and where  
To halt upon the road is death.

"Unto that land where death and sleep  
With stealthy steps walk side by side,  
And cheerless winds their vigils keep,  
Above the place where Franklin died

"And where the stars with fitful sheen  
Look down upon the scene below,  
Where many a sailor's form unseen,  
Lies bleaching pale beneath the snow.

"And where the meek and harmless Cree  
In solitude doth still abide :  
Hard by the shore of that lone sea,  
Whereat Delong and Lockwood died.

"Along the coast our journey lay,  
Where oft we heard the gray wolves call  
The roll of death athwart the way,  
While storm and darkness covered all.

"And oft by headlands bleak and tall,  
While Arctic winds piped loud and free,  
We heard the cumbrous icebergs fall,  
Into the deep and cheerless sea.

"Through other lands we travelled on  
And ere we reached our journey's end,  
We camped where Hood was slain by one,  
Who should at least have been a friend.—

"Where Richardson and Michel met,  
Emaciated, weak and worn,  
And where the murderer paid the debt  
Of retribution swift and stern



"From thence we tramped the country wide,  
With ills intensified and new,  
Unto that sea where Hudson died,  
Deserted by a faithless crew.

"His was the right, and theirs the shame ;  
He was their monarch while at sea ;  
And left to fame a seaman's name,  
That long on earth shall cherished be ;

"Whose name shalt live till that sad sea,  
Receding from its ancient bed,  
Complies with God's supreme decree,  
By giving back to life the dead.

"Five tedious years had past and gone ;  
Five tedious years by land and sea,  
Ere we again encamped upon  
The shore of lake Abittibee.

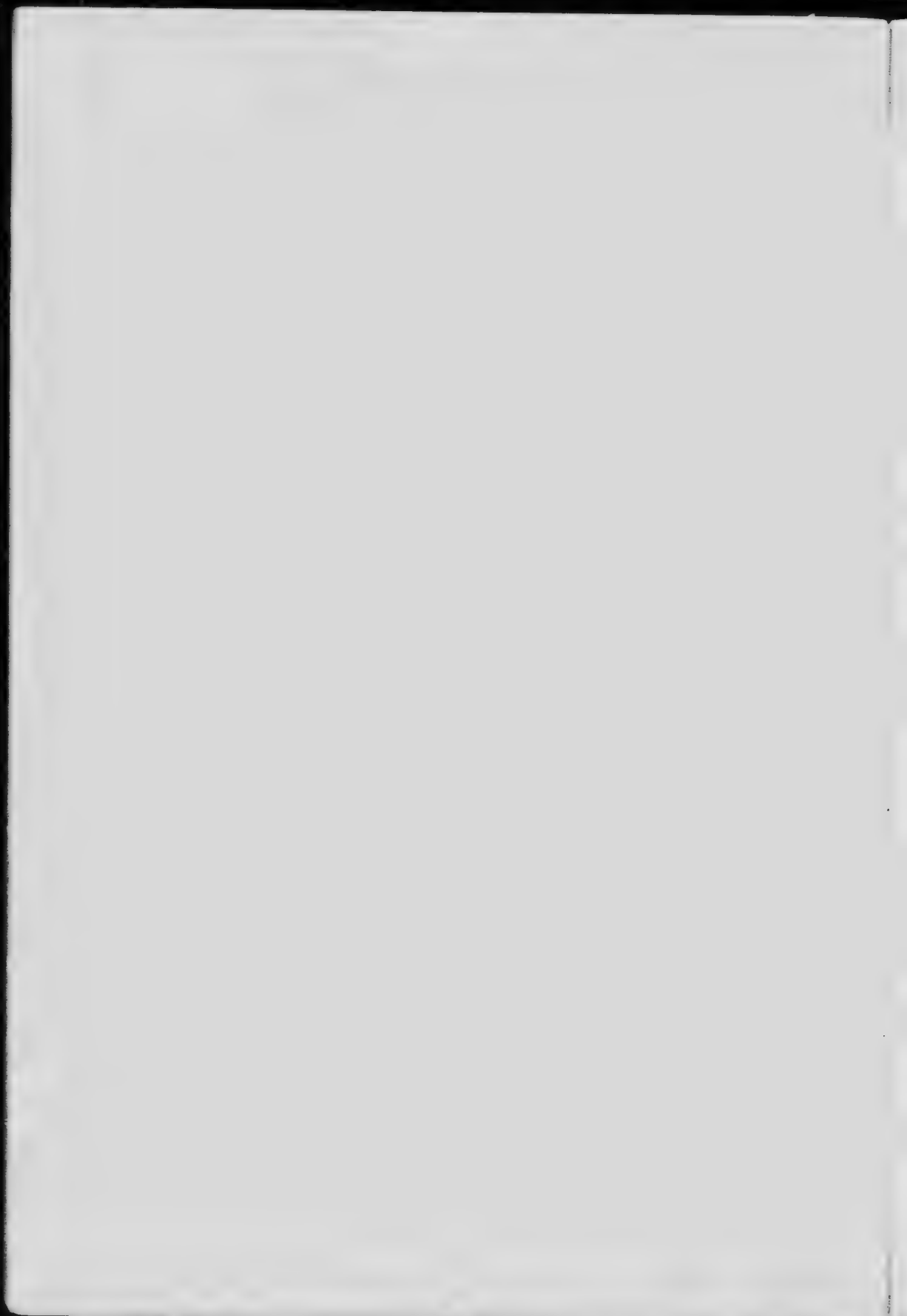
"Thrice happy was the welcoming ;  
Thrice happy wild Abittibee ;  
Where oft we heard the valleys ring  
With shouting huntsmen bold and free.

"September came with dark array,  
When to the huntsmen on the shore,  
We bid adieu and turned away,  
To hie the many waters o'er

"O'er many a river, lake and plain,  
With ills renewed on every side,  
We struggled on that we might gain  
Our homes once more and there abide.

"The setting sun beyond a bay,  
Resplendent shone on rock and tree,  
When my companion of the way  
Spoke thus, who seldom spoke to me :—





" 'The winds are down, the evening still,  
A mist is rising cold and grey,  
Around the point below the hill  
We'll land and with the hermit stay.

" 'But, hark ! Strange notes pervade my ear,  
Presaging death or coming woe :—  
A dirge that tells of sorrows near,  
The words of which no man can know.'

"New terrors seized my trembling guide,  
Who silent grew with rising fear ;  
We gained the shore and onward hied,  
Until the camp was standing near.

"The cold white moon behind a cloud,  
Had gone, and we together stood ;  
And when we called the man aloud,  
His name was telling in the wood.

"On every side the lonely wail,  
The night-bird since had sadder grown,  
The eel below and slimy snail,  
Slept undisturbed and alone.

"The wolf was crying in the dell ;  
The fox away for safety ran ;  
But naught was there wherewith to tell  
Of him, that friendless aged man.

"We called again, and all around,  
On every side his name was flying ;  
The listening hills took up the sound,  
And Norman, Norman, were replying.

"Still bandied round and round, his name,  
Like sweet entrancing music fell ;  
But from the man no answer came,  
Nor aught of him could mortal tell.



"Near falling waters loud and deep,  
That woke to life the forest wild,  
That night I slept, and in my sleep  
I saw the hermit and his child.

"They told me of a happier land,  
Where cares and troubles were forgot,  
And as the twain walked hand in hand,  
They sang of joys man knoweth not.

"And in my sleep I seemed to hear,  
The torrent roaring in its might,  
And truant winds afar and near,  
Discoursing music through the night.

"The sky above was cleft in twain,  
By shouts resounding, as it were  
A chant of God's angelic train  
That none alive shall hear again  
Of Beings that immortal are.

"The truant winds far and near,  
Repeated back the blissful sound,  
And I in sorrow dropped a tear,  
While loud the strain so thin and clear,  
Awoke the lonely hills around

"The last sweet sound had died away,  
Amid the roaring of the burn  
And I beyond the light of day,  
Was left forever and for aye,  
To wander weary and to mourn.

"Then like a pilgrim there forlorn,  
I bent upon the earth and cried,  
'Oh sad the hour that I was born,  
I would that I that hour had died.'

"The spectral shades appeared again,  
And with these words the silence broke :—  
'No more you'll see, so now regain  
Your earthly form, and I awoke.



"The rising sun within the sky,  
Had bathed the hills with silent light,  
But no sad shade could I discern,  
Or other vision of the night.

"And still that shout where'er I be,  
Seems ever ringing in my ears ;  
A month has past and yet to me,  
It seems the length of many years.

"His body sleeps. The storms may rave,  
He heedeth not the cares of men ;  
No idle stone now marks the grave,  
Of Norman Hazard of the glen.

"Yet some aver ; ere morning breaks,  
When moon-beams gild the watery plain ;  
A spirit sings along the lakes  
A wild and solitary strain."











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